

**Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council Minutes  
State Capitol, Madison, WI  
October 15, 2003**

Attendance:

**Voting** members: Bruce Allison, Linda Barcz, Tim Bauknecht, Jeff Edgar, Jeff Gorman, Kevin Hinkley, Greg Lancaster, David Liska, Mike Maddox, Heather Mann, Ken Ottman, Joan Stevens, Richard Welch and Joe Wilson

**Ex-officio, non-voting** members: Leif Hubbard, Bria Radtke, and Dick Rideout

**Non-voting guests:** Paul DeLong, Genny Fannucchi, Tim Gary, Paul Heinen, Kirsten Held and Rick Wojciak.

Absent:

**Voting** members: Bob Brush, Mark Dochnahl, Chris Giese, Wayne Glowac, Laura Jull, Mike Michlig, Bob Skiera,. Dan Traas,

**Actions and Assignments:**

1. Major urban forestry issues for the Governor's Council on Forestry should be conveyed to Ken Ottman **no later than December 1, 2004**
2. Send nominations for council urban forestry awards to Kevin Hinckley **no later than December 15, 2003**.
3. The rankings of the DNR urban forestry strategic plan goals and objectives that the council created at the July meeting, were passed to the DNR as the council's recommended priorities.
4. The council directed the DNR to make public awareness its number 1 priority, and within 6 months to develop a strategic plan for public awareness and begin implementation within 9 months.
5. The council agreed to focus its coming year's activities on public awareness to legislators, local government leaders, the professional community, people of color and philanthropic donors. Heather Mann will coordinate implementation.
6. **Future meeting dates** and locations were decided. **Please put them on your calendar:**
  - February 18, 2004 Madison
  - May 19, 2004 - Madison
  - August 18 or 11, 2004 - Manitowoc
  - November 10, 2004
7. Rideout will provide personalized fact sheets to those members who only received the generic version.

**Meeting Minutes:**

Called to order at 9:15 a.m.

1. Members were introduced. Appointment letters were presented. Minutes from the July meeting were reviewed and approved.
2. Financial report was presented and approved
3. Lisa Burban's report was distributed. Rideout highlighted several items. Question should be directed to Burban.
5. Ken Ottman reported on the first meeting of the Governor's Council on Forestry.  
He was encouraged to see several people who were supportive of urban forestry - Bill Horvath of the National Association of Conservation Districts and a former UF council member, Fred Clark, a consulting forester and certified arborist from Baraboo (Nathan Eisner is now working for Fred), and Eugene Schmit a logger from Northern Wisconsin who first feared that urban would take funding away from traditional forestry, but found that it was important in its own right.

During the meeting, Chief State Forester Paul DeLong identified several issues of concern to the DNR Division of Forestry

- Statewide Forest Plan
- Wildland/urban interface
- Forestry Education Center in Milwaukee
- Best management practices for water quality
- Exotic invasives

These major issues will set the agenda for the next few years, however Ottman requested council members get any urban issues to him **no later than December 1, 2003** so he may bring them to by the Governor's council for consideration.

Governor Doyle charged the council to focus on sustainable forestry certification with the first major initiative being certification of the state forest and county forest lands.

4. Paul Heinen, DNR Policy Initiatives Advisor, discussed methods to convey urban forestry's issues to department leadership and the state legislature. His most successful personal experience was when Preston Cole took him and the DNR Secretary on a personal tour of Milwaukee and conveyed the breath of issues urban forestry faced. This was extremely effective in getting the message across. He suggested that council members can do this with both DNR leadership, state legislators and their staff. It is important to work with legislators and staff on a continuing basis and develop an on-going relationship. Invite them to lunch or events, especially if the media might be there. Arbor Day, grant award ceremonies are good examples.

Consider establishing a "brand" or image for urban forestry. This image or brand:

- Makes a quick connection to urban forestry (classic example Smokey Bear/preventing forest fires)
- Stays when legislators change
- Creates a "that's cool!" reaction

Heinen mentioned that there is little in the way of funds at DNR right now, but forestry at the state is OK. He suggested that to strengthen urban forestry's position the council should make sure to branch out to non-traditional organizations that are doing related work such as 1000 Friends of Wisconsin (development issues), Gathering Waters (water quality), Urban Open Space Foundation (green infrastructure).

Heinen introduced Tim Gary, staff person to Rep Friske (R, Merrill) who is chair of the Assembly Forestry Committee. Mr. Gary described how business is done in the legislature and discussed a handout he provided that outlined the methods to use to interact with the executive and legislative branch of state government.

Major points:

- Know which representatives and staff have similar interest to yours and which side of an issue they are on.
- Bill co-sponsors and both majority and minority chamber leaders are important to contact.
- Talking to staff is like talking to the representative.
- Meet with representatives both in Madison and in their districts. Appointments are preferred.
- Written communication should be short and concise. Bullet points are very helpful. Provide "surprising new information."
- "Be nice" when communicating. You'll have more success.

Mr. Gary also advised the council to develop relationships with the media.

- Supply them with a story.
- Send letters to the editor.
- Utilize public programming.
- If you are high profile, they will seek you out.

6. Linda Barcz and Joe Wilson reported on the National Urban Forestry Conference in San Antonio.

Highlights included:

- Papers quantifying the ecological benefits of urban forests.
- Many examples of collaboration.
- Several videos with celebrities that will be shown on PBS.
- Good participation by students and people of color.
- Joe was able to speak to heads of a number of national organizations.

Concerns:

- Fragmentation of messages. No leadership to "brand" urban forestry. Joe is working with NUCFAC on this.
- More communities need to be involved in Wisconsin.
- More collaboration needs to happen in Wisconsin.

7. Kevin Hinckley distributed and described the UF council award categories and invited council members to nominate candidates. Deadline is December 15, 2003.

8. Council recommendations for DNR strategic priorities:

Heather Mann moved that the rankings of the DNR urban forestry strategic plan goals and objectives that the council created at the July meeting, be passed to the DNR as the council's recommended priorities. Joe Wilson seconded. The motion carried.

Further discussion resulted in a more specific directive:

Greg Lancaster moved that the DNR make public awareness its number 1 priority. Within 6 months it should develop a strategic plan for public awareness and begin implementation within 9 months. Joe Wilson seconded. The motion carried.

9. Council's priority actions:

Heather Mann moved that the council focus its activities on public awareness to legislators, local government leaders, the professional community, people of color and philanthropic donors. Linda Barcz seconded. Discussion centered around what mechanisms will be used and to what end, and that all audiences should be considered, though the focus should be on the motion's list. The motion carried. Heather Mann volunteered to lead the implementation effort.

During lunch, Chief State Forester Paul DeLong addressed the council, thanking them for their service and encouraging them to continue their advocacy role. He also announced that the Secretary had just approved Forestry's request to open the recruitment of the two vacant regional urban forestry coordinator positions. Dick Rideout will coordinate the recruiting for the regions.

10. Annual Urban Forestry Conference.

Dick Rideout briefed the council on the program development and requested speaker and topic ideas. The following list was developed:

- Benefits of Urban Forests - sound bites for policy-makers and the media
- Trees and Soil inter-relations (stormwater infiltration, mitigation, etc.) Mindy Habecker , Dane Co. Extension
- Leaf composting – Leslie Cooperban – UW Soil Science
- Specifications for developments
- Sidewalks and root barriers
- Dealing with Cranky People
- Gypsy Moth
- Trees for Special Purposes and Places
- Native vs. Exotics – Pros & Cons
- Make a special day for DPW or policy makers or police or other less traditional audiences

11. DNR Report

- Dick Rideout's two LTE positions will be announced shortly
- DNR and local APHS PPQ staff toured Detroit in September to view the Emerald ash borer devastation. Over 6 million trees have been lost in the region since the insect was identified 2 years ago. Preventing introduction of this pest into Wisconsin will be a priority. Discussion ensued.
- USDA Innovation grants for inner city projects were announced via email. Deadline for submittal is October 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 2004 is the one-hundredth anniversary of the appointing of the first state forester in Wisconsin. The DNR is planning:
  - Tim Womick presentations with prep and follow-up info provided by Forestry
  - 5th grade poster contest, 4th grade essay contest and calendar
  - Tree planting at the capitol on Arbor Day (WNA and WAA are cooperating)
  - Touring table-top display
  - 100 Years of Forestry book
  - Summer Reading Program at Public Libraries
    - 1. Kid's book
    - 2. Smokey Birthday card contest
    - 3. Training session
  - Holiday Tree at Capitol in '04
- DNR received 84 urban forestry grant applications totaling \$928,000. 67 grants are expected to be awarded totaling \$680,000.

12. Future meeting dates and locations were decided. Please put them on your calendar:

- February 18, 2004 Madison
- May 19, 2004 - Madison
- August 18 or 11, 2004 - Manitowoc
- November 10, 2004

13. Legislative visits

Several council members had appointments with their legislators during and after the council meeting. Rideout provided a fact sheet for members to provide their representatives and staff. Some of the fact sheets were personalized with info about the representatives districts' urban forestry activities, specifically the number of Tree City USAs, the recipients of urban forestry grants (number and total \$), and the recipients of urban forestry awards. Members who returned to the meeting after their appointments reported positive response from the legislators or their staff. Follow up is planned by several to provide requested information. Rideout will provide personalized fact sheets to those members who only received the generic version.

14. The grant program improvement idea brainstorm was tabled until the next meeting. The input will be handled by email.